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FILE ONLY

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Secret Army Units

RATHER: Secret Army units have historically been problems for a lot of societies. As we reported on this broadcast two nights ago, several government agencies now are investigating allegations that some members of secret U. S. Army units misused large sums of officially laundered taxpayer money.

David Martin at the Pentagon reports tonight how the fraud investigations have exposed one unit whose existence wasn't exactly household knowledge.

5 DAVID MARTIN: Sea Spray, a secret Army unit which flies helicopters like these on sensitive missions ordered by President Reagan, is a target of an investigation into the mishandling of a \$300 million intelligence contingency fund. Several Army men and civilians who worked with Sea Spray, which is based at Fort Eustis, Virginia, are now under investigation for failing to account for thousands of dollars in expense money. The former commander of Sea Spray was expected to testify in secret today at the court-martial of a sergeant at the Army's Intelligence Command. Earlier this week, Lt. Colonel Dale Duncan was indicted on charges involving the charter-

ing for \$8,400 of a DC-3 in Miami to transport a large antenna for one of Sea Spray's operations in Central America.

That operation, code-named Queen's Hunter, began during the 1982 elections in El Salvador and is still underway. Planes like these, disguised as belonging to a civilian mapping team, eavesdrop on guerrilla communications. In 1981, a Sea Spray helicopter lifted a representative of Lebanese Christian leader Camille Chamoun out of Beirut and flew him to Israel for a secret meeting with Israeli intelligence.

In 1983, Sea Spray helicopters were sent to Barbados with \$100,000 in cash to infiltrate a CIA agent into Grenada shortly before U. S. forces stormed the island. The operation was cancelled at the last moment when the CIA agent got cold feet.

A Sea Spray agent once tried to purchase a boat from this Florida yacht broker that could be used to secretly transport helicopters overseas. That transaction never took place. But one source said the Army subsequently purchased a large ocean-going cargo ship for that same purpose.

Sea Spray is a classic black operation, one designed never to see the light of day. The money is almost impossible to trace. As one participant in Sea Spray said "Where this money comes from I don't think anybody knows."

David Martin, CBS News.